

is entirely carnivorous."³ "It is wholly carnivorous in its habits, and is very destructive to fish and young water-fowl."⁴

The above statements are undoubtedly true in the main, fish and other animal life constituting the chief part of its food. The following record is, therefore, of interest as being an exception to the usual habit.

On July 9, 1916, I took a Snapping Turtle (carapace 12 inches in length) from a mud hole on the border of a salt marsh at Sagamore Beach, Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The stomach was well filled with recently eaten marsh grass (*Distichlis spicata*), the blades being intact, although bent and tangled. There was nothing else in the stomach. The turtle was a male, quite fat and apparently in a healthy condition.

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SNAKE CONSERVATION IN CALIFORNIA.

The Lorquin Natural History Club of Los Angeles, Calif., is at present devoting some time and money to calling the attention of Californians to the use of some of the harmless snakes and the reasons why they should not be killed. In the vicinity of the city signs are being posted at mountain resorts, small cities and along roads. These signs read as follows:

DO NOT KILL HARMLESS SNAKES.

They are useful in destroying disease-bearing rodents.

The only snake in California that can harm you is the Rattlesnake.

*Lorquin Natural History Club,
Los Angeles.*

³ The Reptile Book, p. 14, by R. L. Ditmars.

⁴ The American Natural History. Vol. IV, p. 41, by W. T. Hornaday.

The club is not a snake club, for only about two out of its twenty Active Members are deeply interested in herpetology.

Among the most useful of the California snakes is the Pacific Bull Snake (or Gopher Snake), *Pituophis catenifer*, which is common on the Pacific Coast. Its food consists chiefly of rodent pests, such as gophers, mice, ground-squirrels and small rabbits. Although he prefers these animals for food, the Pacific Bull Snake has a rather accommodating appetite, which must under the force of necessity adapt itself to circumstances and include in his ophiological menu, birds, an occasional rat, bats, and sometimes a lizard or two. Sometimes an egg (or several) is commandeered, but I have never known of a Pacific Bull Snake's having eaten any egg as large as a chicken's.

One sixty-four inch Pacific Bull Snake that was brought to me was handled too much. A slight touch of *mal de mer* resulted in his vomiting four full-grown gophers, none of which was more than slightly digested. On another occasion more than a dozen mice had the misfortune to run foul of a mouse trap I had set for living mice. These same mice had the additional misfortune all to find their way into the stomach of a godd-sized hungry Pacific Bull Snake.

Taking it all in all, the good done by the Pacific Bull Snake has already earned him the protection of many ranchers and far outweighs any harmful depredations his lack of discretion may at times mislead him to make.

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NOTES ON THAMNOPHIS SIRTALIS FROM CAPE ANN, MASSACHUSETTS.

Dr. A. G. Ruthven in his monograph on the Garter Snakes, plots out some curves of scale variation in the genus and suggests the desirability of securing data on the scale formulae of specimens from other